

1/22/63 -
whitaker
calif.

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"...Interior Dialogue, a notebook I keep..."

"Shortly after you left the Quarter, I reckon back, I beat the hell-fire shit out of Millie one fine morning when she got bitchy. A number of things followed: (1) after two days of self-repentant uncertainty, I was overwhelmed by a sense of total relief (sic); (2) I spent the next few weeks reading Alan Watts, laying around various bars, drinking, trying to make Vic's newest girl friend, Joan, extending friendly hands to Mim, Loy, and Lane; trying to make Judy (Moe's daughter; I don't think you know her); having a casual affair with a little girl from North Carolina; dating Jessica; and drifting from one party to another with a seldom-opened notebook in my hand. In the midst of this, I got in a first fight with Henry Avery -- Millie's latest grief friend of the moment -- in which I was able to severely gouge an eye, ~~said by some~~, and ~~leave him with only a light wound on the~~ left forehead (he gouged eye his). He left me with Herman at his side, explaining that gentlemen do not settle things in such a barbaric manner, and him (Henry) shouting threats to get a gun and come after me. So I decided to kill him, since he'd initiated the first blow. I went back to the B'House, where the fight started, and tried to figure out whether to use a lead pipe or a knife. Vic finally talked me out of it. So, being now a woman-beater, a street-brawler, and a militant do-nothing -- I was hero of the Quarter. Al Thompson bought me a beer, once, even. Judy Thompson congratulated me on beating up Millie and both agreed I had the makings of a fine writer. Every time I entered the B'House, which became home to me more than ever, it was with a different young lady on my arm than I last went out with. And each time, the various table groups tried to outbid each other for my company...lasted almost a week...I came away richer in friends and more tolerant of the French Quarter way to Western civilization. Even Francisco and I had a couple of bartop discussions and exchanged drink-buying honors. And that, Phil, is how the Quarter got in my blood...upon major publication I may or may not return to school. I just want to spend the major portion of the rest of my life on the banks of the Mississippi, writing at least a page a day, and sailing the trade winds that cross ~~the~~ in the B'House....Al Thompson coached me on my writing, and I admit, his advice was worth taking....spend a couple of afternoons a week in class at his place or the local saloon..." This, as I see it, is a remarkable self-revelation and contains a number of leads. The letter closes, "Peace, but not ~~surrender~~ at the price of surrender..."

8/31/63, Postcard from Mexico City.

10/3/68. A brief letter announcing his return and "Vic is working in the Outrigger at the Sheraton. Jerry Jennings is sitting here playing word games with Millie's daughter. Dick Hoffman is sitting at the bar, ~~making~~ talking to Pat. Nothing has changed..." Now this is long after the Hoffman breakup and it indicates both may have known Kerry. This letter concludes, with the feigned

hand-lettering of a child reading, "My Name is Valerie. I AM in Grade 2 its late abd my eyes ARE Tired. Can I Go and Sleep With You? About the author: Valeria Storm Fletcher is 6½. This is the first creative thing to come out of the B'House in 24 hours."

7/22/63. This is written, rather than printed. It announces his projected return (via Mexico) in September. It concludes "Viva Picaro!" It has a slight poem on the back,

1/23/64, from ³¹ 425 S.W. 31 St, Apt 2, Tallington: "I think the Warren Board will inquisit me soon on the assassination. I was a corps friend of Oswald's. If they really ~~reap~~ get power to suspend the 5th Amend., I think I'll refuse to testify- punishment or no - out of sheer outrage."

IM By that date no single hearing had been held. There is nothing in any of the files to even indicate there was or had been any intention of calling him as a witness or to "inquisit". The cause of his "outrage" is not clear, but the inference I draw is that anyone would think of trying to punish whoever murdered the President. How strange it is that of all the places he could go to be a door-man, he picked the back yard of the thing he pretended to dislike, the government.

2/14/64-This is the only letter dated internally to this point, and it uses the military day first. It is a curt response to a request for the return of a written proposal for the sale of a poem (dated 2/10) He says he threw it in the trash, because "I don't collect anything very ardently -- not even Objectivist Newsletters. No point in it, the way I figure: Let my grandchildren fend for themselves".

5/18/64, postmarked Tallington, a copy of Volume 1. No. 3 of "Liberal Innovator" He signed his contribution, "The Battle Of Madison Avenue". It is amazingly reactionary while pretending to be "liberal"-uses that word, despite his Warren Commission testimony

2/8/64 (This one has no envelope) "...I had a bit of luck with The Idle Warriors, which I now rewrite, as it was based on a Marine Corps Buddy of mine who really happens to have been Lee Harvey Oswald. Or did I tell you? Anyway, then and now, it's about a Marine who becomes disillusioned and goes to Russia. Tom ~~Sancton~~ Sancton sent the final chapter of the old draft to his publisher with a covering letter. So far no word. Meanwhile, I'm redoing it with more unity and more philosophical - political- cultermal - damnation. The whole thing was very interesting for a while, the assassination, because -- on the surface -- there was good reason for the unenlightened SS and FBI to suspect I might've had a hand in it. We had some polite conversations and finally, I guess, I was cleared. No word from them lately. I hope, though, my move to this area scared the piss out of 'em. Whether or not I'll be asked to put my 2¢ in at the Warren Hearing, I don't know. Or care. When it is all over, though, I ~~may~~ yet go pias on JFK's grave, RIP. Check the ~~Sancton~~ next Sat. Eve. Post, if you're interested, I got a note from them that my letter to the Editors -- A sarcastic comment on Arthur Miller's new play -- 'is tabbed for possible publication'...Nothing else... excepting a letter from New York -- From Jessica -- asking me to come and live with her, but proposing that we not have sexual relations. My reply was only slightly more cutting than my usual nasty remarks...Ho he ha ho!..."

Unless one of these letters has a reference to "Moonlight", one of the series is missing.

The change in attitude to the Commission and its work is interesting, as is the heroic about being suspect. There is nothing in the available record to substantiate it, but were there grounds, this would be even more interesting.